



SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON HEALTH DISTRICT

Preserving, promoting and protecting health in Clark and Skamania Counties

Communicating Our Success

2001 Annual Report



What is Success? *Success Is Changing Together*



Our mission is to protect and promote people's health in Clark and Skamania counties. How?

- *Prevent the spread of disease*
- *Protect against health threats in food and water*
- *Respond to disasters*

Welcome to our 2001 annual report. We're eager to share this look at public-health excellence in Clark and Skamania counties, where our approximately 155 employees serve 360,000 people.

Year 2001 meant challenge and change for our community and nationwide. The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and subsequent anthrax scares galvanized our country. We looked to our leaders for strength, our families for solace, ourselves for courage. It put public health to the test.

We launched 2001 with a work plan reflecting our commitment to promote health and protect people from disease. Our priorities? Food safety, protection of water sources, tobacco prevention and control, immunization of two-year-old children and response to infectious disease. And with a salute to the future we developed a four-year strategic plan to advance our accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

The future looks good. In a historic decision, Southwest Washington Health District will dissolve by the end of 2002. Thus Clark County will provide public-health services for its residents, and Skamania County will change its own public-health structure. This brings new opportunities to maximize resources in the face of reduced funding.

Our success lies in changing together. As local public health embarks on reorganizing within both counties, excellence remains our focus. We are honored to serve you and feel excited to communicate our success.


Kay Koontz
Executive Director

Our 2001 Board of Health

Chairwoman Mary Kufeldt-Antle, Council Member, City of Camas
Craig Pridemore, Clark County Commissioner
Judie Stanton, Clark County Commissioner
Betty Sue Morris, Clark County Commissioner
L.W. "Bud" Quinn, Skamania County Commissioner
Bob Talent, Skamania County Commissioner
Jeanne Harris, Council Member, City of Vancouver
Jim Moeller, Council Member, City of Vancouver
John Kirk, Mayor, City of North Bonneville
Jim Robertson, Mayor, Town of Yacolt

Our Executive Director

Kay Koontz

Our Health Officer

Dr. Karen Steingart

Success Is Preventing the Spread of Disease



Epidemiology/Assessment and Research/Infectious Disease/Family Planning/Clinic Services *Susan Lybarger, Director*

- *Clinic Services – Immunizations, Refugee Screening and Health Access Programs*
- *Family Planning*
- *Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response*
- *Infectious Disease*
- *Assessment and Research*

“An ounce of prevention ...” – we bet you can recite the rest by heart. From immunizing young ones against disease to collaborating on bioterrorism preparedness, we strive to protect our community.

In 2001 we provided immunizations more than 2,400 times among children age two and younger, reflecting a minimum 125 percent increase from the previous year. That means protecting more kids against diseases such as measles, mumps, chickenpox, polio and hepatitis. Plus, giving additional vaccine to local healthcare providers and teaching parents the importance of immunizations ensured even more little ones received protection.

We work fast. Clark County experienced 14 cases – including two deaths – of meningococcal disease in 2001. The disease, an infection in the blood and the fluid in the spinal cord and around the brain, is relatively rare. But our infectious disease staff, including experienced nurses, worked quickly to prevent further spread.

This included ensuring those who had close contact with an infected person received appropriate medicine. It also meant reminding the community, especially parents, of the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease and to get prompt medical attention.

The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on our country and subsequent anthrax scares inspired heightened surveillance and preparation against bioterrorism and other health threats. Health Officer Dr. Karen Steingart and other staff worked with local, state and national public health and emergency management agencies to strengthen our preparedness.

We counted Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency, Washington State Department of Health, Southwest Washington Medical Center, federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oregon Health Services and many other public and private agencies as our partners in this task.



Success Is a Glass of Clean Water



Environmental Health Services *Lou Dooley, Director*

- *Consumer Protection – Food Safety, Water Systems, Public Pools and Spas, Water Resources*
- *Resource Protection – Liquid Waste, Solid Waste, Site Hazard Assessment, Complaint Program*
- *Administrative Support*

A midnight kitchen visit to enjoy water from the tap – no worries other than waking the dog, because you know your water is safe to drink. Count on the folks in our environmental health division as your additional partners in disease prevention.

From keeping waste and other dangerous materials away from underground water sources to ensuring restaurants properly handle your food, we're in your corner. Check out a few accomplishments from year 2001:

- Reviewed nearly 200 public and private water systems to ensure they could produce and distribute safe drinking water.
- Added nearly 5,000 septic systems to our operation and maintenance program, which includes requiring inspections every four years by licensed professionals. This boosted the number of septic systems in the program to more than 22,000.
- Conducted nearly 3,000 routine inspections at food-service establishments such as restaurants and cafés. Add that to the nearly 600 school cafeteria, temporary event and pre-opening inspections we performed.
- Handled 50 investigations of possible food-borne illnesses and checked out nearly 400 complaints.
- Gave more than 20 food-safety presentations to professional groups and consumers.
- Inspected more than 400 pools and spas.
- Tested Battle Ground Lake – which reopened in 2001 after an August 1999 *E. coli* outbreak – nearly 60 times. It passed each test, allowing swimmers to enjoy the lake throughout the summer.



Success Is a Nourishing Meal



Community Health and Wellness Services *Janet Charles, Director*

- *Women, Infants and Children*
- *Parent and Child Health*
- *Health Promotion*
- *Skamania County Unit*
- *HIV/AIDS Care and Coordination*

Got cereal? Many of our Women, Infants and Children – or, WIC – clients do. We participate in the federal WIC program to connect low-income pregnant or breastfeeding women, infants and other young children with nutritious food, nutrition assessments and education, and related services.

In 2001 we provided WIC services to an average 7,400 clients each month. That included giving vouchers for clients to buy healthy foods at local groceries. And we won a grant from Southwest Washington Independent Forward Thrust – or, SWIFT – for kitchen equipment, to share recipes and samples during education sessions with WIC families.

Also, tobacco prevention and control sat high on our radar throughout 2001. From tobacco-free coalitions in Clark and Skamania counties to our youth group, BREATHE, teamwork yielded success.

Accomplishments included teaching younger students the dangers of tobacco by organizing “Bubble Jam,” a dance for View Ridge Middle schoolers in Ridgefield, Wash. BREATHE produced the event with the Ridgefield High School chapter of Junior Statesmen of America. Celebrating the theme “blow bubbles, not smoke,” they distributed gum, displayed posters and shared materials from the American Cancer Society.

BREATHE, which launched in February 2001, has earned recognition including a state award for its tobacco-awareness work involving collaboration with others. The group’s feats reflect Southwest Washington Health District’s commitment to community collaboration.



Success Is Honoring Excellence



*Kathy Hammond,
nutrition assistant
Community Health and Wellness*



*Yvonne Van Nostran,
compliance coordinator
Environmental Health*



*Dawn Spellman,
outreach worker
Community Health and Wellness*

What's better than earning awards for public-health excellence? Honoring others who have helped us – and thus our community – succeed. One can't say "thank you" enough, but we sure try. So between giving and receiving awards in 2001, it felt good to honor excellence.

Community Awards

For the American Cancer Society's 25th annual Great American Smokeout, we teamed with the Tobacco Free Coalition of Clark County to honor many who have helped protect people's health from secondhand smoke. Take a look:

- Christine's, Smitty's and Thai Little Home restaurants and Royal Oaks Country Club – for making their businesses smoke-free.
- Vancouver Ford/Hyundai, Vancouver Toyota and Washington State Patrol – for distributing litter bags with information on tobacco-related dangers.
- Kristine Perry of Clark County Family YMCA – for performing tobacco-prevention work with teens.
- Stephanie Keller – for donating time and energy as a youth volunteer.

Staff Awards

- Employees of the Year – Yvonne Van Nostran, for excellence in customer service. Yvonne is a compliance coordinator with our environmental health division's liquid waste unit • Bill Springmeyer, Debi Christopherson, Belinda Walker and Rick Guerra, for teamwork. They form our facilities and purchasing team in the administrative services division • Michael McNickle, for creative work activity. Mike supervises our consumer protection unit in the environmental health division • Tim Frimberger, for excellence in customer service to health district staff. Tim is a personal-computer technician in administrative services.
- HIV/AIDS Educator Award for Region 6 of Washington state's Regional AIDS Service Networks – Dawn Spellman, an outreach worker in the health promotion unit of our community health and wellness division.
- Certificate of Appreciation from the Washington state Department of Health WIC Program – Kathy Hammond, a nutrition assistant in the Women, Infants and Children unit of our community health and wellness division.

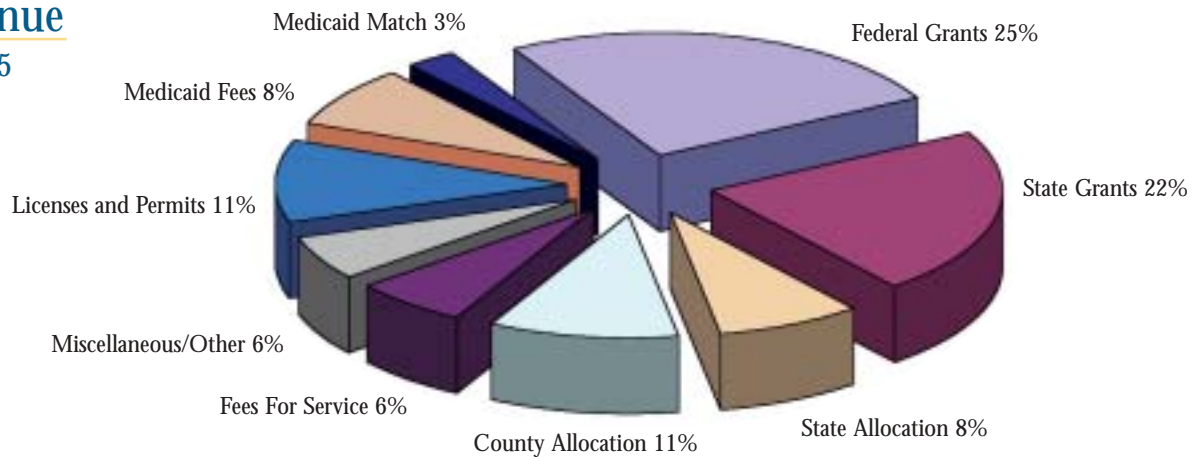
Agency Awards

- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Award from the Washington Finance Officers Association – Southwest Washington Health District's first award for excellence in financial reporting.
- Significant Contribution Award for Excellence in Public Health from the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials – for the health district's success against an *E. coli* outbreak in August 1999 at Battle Ground Lake in Battle Ground, Wash.
- Selecky Award from Washington state Secretary of Health Mary Selecky – honoring BREATHE for its tobacco-awareness work involving collaboration with other groups.
- CARE-Commitment, Action, Results, Excellence Award from the Board of Clark County Commissioners and its substance abuse and mental health advisory boards – honoring BREATHE's work to promote a healthy community and way of life.
- Certificate of Appreciation from the Multnomah County Tobacco Prevention Program – awarding the health district for our work with Multnomah's tobacco prevention coalition.

Success Is a Balanced Budget

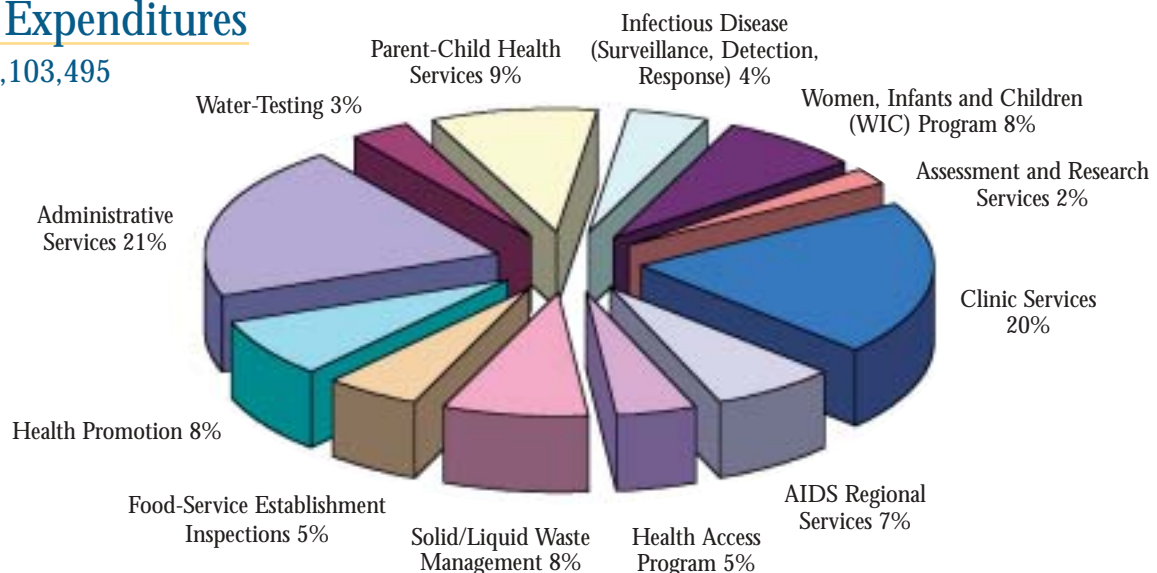
2001 Revenue

\$13,103,495



2001 Expenditures

\$13,103,495



Administrative Services *David Kelly, Director*

- *Human Resources*
- *Purchasing*
- *Information Technology*
- *Fiscal Services*
- *Medical Records*
- *Billing*
- *Grants and Contracts*

We want to hear from you!

Please send your comments about our 2001 annual report.

How was it helpful?

How can it help more?

Thanks for sharing your thoughts!



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